In the Claims:

Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method of billing a telephone call made through a network that utilizes a modem, comprising the steps of:

receiving a request from a user of the network to place a telephone call through the modem;

before the telephone call is placed through the modem, authenticating the request as coming from a valid user of the network based at least in part on user identifying information for the user, and without requesting and requiring user input before each telephone call, wherein the authenticating is solely performed at a location associated with the modem, and not at a destination associated with the telephone call;

correlating the user identifying information with billing information associated with the user; and

forwarding call charge information from a public telephony network so that the user is billed for the call.

2.   (Original) The method recited in claim 1, wherein the correlating step comprises the step of searching a database comprising records of user identifying data for all valid users of the network.

3.   (Previously Presented) The method recited in claim 2, wherein the searching step comprises the step of comparing the user identifying information to the billing information associated with the user, and authenticating the user when the user's user identifying data matches the billing information.

4.   (Previously Presented) The method recited in claim 3, further comprising the step of passing the telephone call through the network after the user identifying information is authenticated.

5.   (Original) The method recited in claim 4 wherein the network comprises a wireless network.

6.   (Currently Amended) A method of processing a request through a network to place a telephone call via a modem, comprising the steps of:

receiving user identifying information associated with a user that has made the request through the network to place the telephone call via a modem pool, and wherein the receiving user identifying information is performed without requesting or requiring user input before each telephone call;

before placing the telephone call via the modem, searching a database containing information related to users of the network to correlate the user identifying information with the user and to authenticate the user as a valid user of the network, wherein the database is located at a location associated with the modem pool; and

if the user is authenticated as a valid user of the network,

forwarding call charge information from a public telephony network so that the user is billed for the call; and

placing the telephone call via the modem.

7.   (Original) The method recited in claim 6, wherein the searching step further comprises the step of comparing the user identifying information with records of billing information stored in the database.

8.   (Original) The method recited in claim 7, further comprising the step of billing the user for the telephone call when the user has been authenticated as a valid user of the network.

9.   (Original) The method recited in claim 8, wherein the network comprises a wireless network.

10.   (Currently Amended) A computer system that utilizes a modem for processing calls made through a network, comprising:

a server able to receive user identifying information associated with a user of the network that has requested to place a telephone call via a shared modem pool and able to, after the user has been authenticated as a valid user of the network, place the telephone call via the shared modem pool and without requesting user input before each telephone call;

a search module able to search a database containing information related to users of the network in order to correlate the user identifying information with the user and authenticate the user as a valid user of the network and able to notify the server of authentication of the user, wherein the search module, database, or both are at an intermediate location within the network, and not at a source or destination associated with the telephone call; and

a billing aggregator module able to aggregate charge call information received from a public telephony network and the user identifying information so that the user is billed for the call.

11.   (Previously Presented) The computer system recited in claim 10, further comprising a correlating module for comparing the user identifying information with records of user billing information stored in the database.

12.   (Previously Presented) The computer system recited in claim 11, further comprising a billing module in communication with the correlating module for billing the user for the telephone call when the user has been authenticated as a valid user of the network.

13.   (Previously Presented) The computer system recited in claim 12, wherein the network comprises a wireless network.

14.   (Previously Presented) The computer system recited in claim 10, further comprising a shared modem pool with multiple modems that is accessible over the network to each of multiple users of the network.

15.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium whose contents cause a computing device to handle a telephone call made via a modem through a network, by performing a method comprising:

receiving a request from a user of the network to place a telephone call via a shared modem pool having multiple modems;

receiving user identifying information to authenticate the request as coming from a valid user of the network, and wherein the receiving user identifying information is performed without requiring user input before each telephone call, and wherein the authenticating is substantially performed at a location associated with the modem pool, and not at a destination associated with the telephone call;

if the user identifying information received is authenticated,

correlating the user identifying information with billing information associated with the user;

placing the telephone call via one of the modems of the shared modem pool; and

billing the user for the call based at least in part on the billing information associated with the user and on call charge information for the placed telephone call that is received from a public telephony network.

16.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 15 wherein the modems of the shared modem pool are connected to the public telephony network, and wherein the placing of the telephone call via the modem

includes supplying the billing information associated with the user to the public telephony network.

17.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 15 wherein the network comprises a wireless network.

18.   (Previously Presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 15 wherein the method is performed for each of multiple users of the network.